

**8<sup>th</sup> IAP European Regional Conference**  
**Hate Crime**  
**The Hague, 12 – 14 March 2008**

**Opening Speech by Elizabeth Howe, IAP General Counsel**

**‘Hate Crime’**

Why?

Personal interest/development of policies within England and Wales

Developing problem?

More specific legislation

Need to improve CJS response to Hate Crime

Different types;

*Racist*

*Religious*

*Homophobic*

*Transphobic*

*Gender [domestic violence, honour killings, female circumcision]*

*Disability*

*Elder*

*Cyberhate*

*Violent Extremism[Animal Rights, terrorism, environmental groups]*

Issue for all of us who work within CJ System or law enforcement wherever we are in the world. Need to build Societies with opportunities for all.

Hate Crime has a corrosive effect on victims, their families and the wider community.

Impacts adversely on Community Cohesion because makes people seem unsafe and insecure.

Combating ‘Hate Crime’ way of addressing feelings of insecurity and increasing public confidence in criminal justice system.

Addressing root causes in crime eg bigotry and ignorance should be main thrust of activity eg through schools etc. Whilst Prosecution last resort, a robust Criminal Justice response can influence public opinion and shape social responsibility.

Action can include introduction new legislation and new processes, setting clear standards for CJ agencies, developing training, ensuring more reporting, improving the collection of data to show prevalence and impact of changes.

This event developed to examine what happening in Europe..

Are there opportunities to learn from eachother and share good practice.

I also hope we can develop a basis for one of the IAP's 'Best Practice Booklet'. Whilst it will be confined to Europe it may form the basis of one for rest of world.

We must all acknowledge that there have been instances where the criminal justice system has not responded in the way it should.

I hope we can all share examples of where we have and the benefits.

In England and Wales, the racist murder of Anthony Walker was a landmark case. Mr Justice Leveson, now Lord Justice Leveson and tipped to become the Judicial head of Criminal Justice, condemned the crime as poisonous to any civilised society and demanding deterrent sentencing.

Further, the mother of Anthony Walker made a public statement after the hearing that Mr Justice Leveson's approach to sentencing had personally given her increased confidence in the way the Criminal justice system dealt with Racist crime.

We shall hear more about that case and the guidance which emerged in one of workshops.

The Prosecution is only one element of The Criminal Justice system. How are these offenders dealt with post conviction. Should there be specially constructed programmes?.

Should the same considerations apply to other hate crimes eg homophobic crimes?

These crimes strike at the very heart of a modern civilised society that should be comfortable with differences.

We know that many of these crimes remain unreported.

What can be done?

In England and Wales a number of clear public policy statements have been developed to try to combat hate crime and the impact is being assessed by measuring whether the number of successful prosecutions has increased. Public Confidence had to be increased in order to maintain the support of victims which was usually vital to the prosecution.

What about particularly disaffected groups eg Gypsies and Travellers and the Moslem Community where there exist particular tensions?

There are a number of issues to contend with;

- Anonymity of victims

- Lack of common definition across Europe as to what constitutes a 'Hate Crime'

I hope we shall have plenty of opportunity to explore these topics and will produce some basic recommendations worth developing.